

A RESOLUTION URGING THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO LIMIT CORPORATE SPENDING FOR POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the United States of America and our country's Bill of Rights, exemplifying our country's guiding principles, were created and enacted to protect the rights of individual human beings, e.g. "The People"; and

WHEREAS, corporations are artificial entities created to enact business transactions; they are not natural persons; they do not constitute "The People" and they are not therefore due the rights and protections granted by the Constitution and Bill of Rights; and

WHEREAS, in Austin v. Michigan Chamber of Commerce (1990), the Supreme Court of the United States recognized the threat to a republican form of government posed by "... the corrosive and distorting effects of immense aggregations of wealth that are accumulated with the help of the corporate form and that have little or no correlation to the public's support for the corporations political ideas ... "; and

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court in Citizens United v. the Federal Election Commission (2010) reversed the decision in Austin, rolling back limits on corporate spending in the electoral process, which allows unlimited corporate spending in political elections; and

WHEREAS, unlimited spending by corporations will allow business entities to influence elections, candidate selections, policy decisions and sway elections, all of which is in direct contravention of our country's founding principles of representative government, and

WHEREAS, in Buckley v. Valeo (1976), the Supreme Court of the United States held that the appearance of corruption justified limits on contributions to candidates, but it rejected other fundamental interests that the Township Council finds compelling such as the creation of a level playing field to ensure that "The People", all citizens, regardless of wealth, shall have an opportunity to make their political views heard; and

WHEREAS, Article V of the United States Constitution empowers and obligates "The People" of the United States of America to use the constitutional amendment process to correct decisions of the United States Supreme Court that egregiously contravene the principles of our country's democracy and representative form of government.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of North Brunswick, Middlesex County, State of New Jersey, that it is the position of the Township Council that corporations should not receive the same constitutional rights as natural persons; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Council firmly believes that limits on political spending will promote the goals of our Country's guiding principles as embodied in the Constitution of the United States of America and the Bill of Rights by ensuring that all citizens, all of the people, regardless of wealth, shall have an opportunity to have their political views heard; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Council of the Township of North Brunswick hereby expresses its support for efforts to pass an Amendment to the United States Constitution related to campaign finance reform and ending the doctrine of corporate constitutional rights; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Council of the Township of North Brunswick hereby respectfully, but strongly, urges the State of New Jersey's Congressional delegation to make a Congressional proposal for an amendment to the United States Constitution to address the threats to this country's representative form of government as set forth in this Resolution, the first order of business in its legislative work.